

# Montana and the Sky

Vol. 33, No. 4

MONTANA AERONAUTICS DIVISION

April, 1979



Combs Freightair inaugurates guaranteed overnight freight service to Casper and Billings from Denver, operating a fleet of Convair 440's.

## New Freight Service to Billings

Combs Freightair, a division of Combs Airways, began all cargo airline certificated overnight airfreight service between Denver, Colorado, Casper, Wyoming and Billings, Montana on April 2nd.

Operating five days per week, Combs provides pick-up and delivery and guarantees overnight delivery to and from these cities as well as interline connection with major airlines. The present schedule calls for a 9:00 p.m. Denver departure with a stop in Casper and turnaround in Billings, returning through Casper and arriving in Denver by 6:15 a.m. the following morning. Arrangements for the service can be made in each city through Combs agents and a toll free WATS number is available for all inquiries outside of Colorado (1-800-525-1348). The three city service begins an overnight freight network

which will reach from Chicago to Los Angeles and San Francisco by 1980.

Combs has acquired eight Convair 440 aircraft which have been modified to a freight configuration and can carry most standard air freight containers. Shipments of up to 250 pounds can be shipped without prior notification.

To further supplement freight coverage of the western United States, Combs operates a fleet of over 30 Aero Commander 680 FL aircraft as feeders to the major cities served by the Convairs. All the aircraft are available for charter freight service in addition to scheduled freight service.

Combs Freightair sales are managed by Vice President Jack Gehrke, former wide receiver for the Denver Broncos and Ted Gembzycynski, a veteran of ten years in the freight business.

## Inspections 1979

Again this year the Aeronautics Division will handle the general aviation portion of the Facility Records Program for the FAA Regional Office in Denver. The program has been considerably expanded this year to include 112 airports, up from last year's 49.

The work will include on-site inspections at each airport, interview of appropriate local officials, and revision of the existing Facility Records based upon information thus gained. Copies of the data gathered are then forwarded to Denver and on to FAA headquarters in Washington, D.C., where it is used in numerous FAA and industry publications. The information is valuable also in updating our Montana Airport Directory and Aeronautical Chart, and also in our general airport development programs.

The FAA will reimburse the Aeronautics Division roughly \$200 for each of 100 airports and approximately \$300 for each of 12 airports for which a sketch of the general airport layout is not available. The FAA will continue to conduct the air carrier portion of the Facility Records Program in the foreseeable future. We will appreciate the cooperation of airport managers and other local officials when Aeronautics personnel "come to call."



Cheryl Stroh and her father, Walt Hensley, enjoying a break during the MATA convention.

# Administrator's Column

Here's a legislative update:

HB 60 — The fuel tax increase bill received an adverse committee report (do not pass) in the Senate Taxation Committee. An attempt was made to pull the bill out on the Senate floor, but didn't have enough backing. The Senate voted to accept the adverse committee report. During the March 22 & 23 Aeronautics Board meeting considerable concern was expressed regarding the Aeronautics Division budget. The Board reviewed programs and discussed several areas where cuts can possibly be made without jeopardizing the overall effectiveness of the division. The Board has taken under advisement several alternatives which will bring about a balanced budget for the 1980-81 fiscal years.

HB 582 — The antique aircraft tax exemption bill was signed by the Governor and will go into effect July 1, 1979.

HB 651 — The city tax levy bill, which would have allowed cities to impose a city tax on aircraft, was killed in the House Taxation Committee.

SB 290 — The powerline marking bill passed the Senate and was forwarded to the House Local Government Committee. This bill was so emasculated by amendments that the very organization, the Montana Pilots Association, who sponsored the bill, found it necessary to have the bill killed in the house committee. We have discussed this problem at length with legal counsel of both Montana-Dakota Utility and the Montana Power Company. They have indicated an interest in cooperating with us in an effort to identify possible hazards and taking appropriate corrective action. We, therefore, are asking your help to identify any transmission line crossings of rivers, lakes, canyons and cuts which may be hazardous to the safe flight of aircraft. If you know of such hazards, please write to us identifying the exact location.

HB 779 — The airport liquor license bill has passed both houses and is currently awaiting the Governor's signature. Upon signature the law will become effective.

HB 370 — The revision of private aircraft mileage allowance for state purposes passed the Senate and the House. However, the House Appropriations Committee amended the bill to read nautical miles instead of statute miles.

HB 732 — The airport zoning bill was killed in the Senate Local Government Committee. We were somewhat surprised that this one didn't pass. The existing laws regarding airport zoning are very ambiguous and without any teeth.

\* \* \* \* \*

I attended the annual Montana Aviation Trades Association convention held in Billings on March 15 to 18. The first portion of the agenda was devoted to agricultural operations and recertification of the aerial applicators. Many interesting and educational programs were presented which included FAR 135 operations, insurance, rates and charges surveys, flight instruction management, etc.

The Saturday night banquet was an evening of good food, drink and gaiety. A group from the Billings Studio Theatre, headed by David Grapes, entertained the MATA group that evening with a series of superb sketches especially written for the occasion. Mr. Dick Coffey, Editor of the Airport Services Management Magazine was the guest speaker. Mr. Coffey left the audience with a great deal of thought provoking and down-to-earth concepts of the small versus large airports and fixed base operators.

I cannot let the opportunity pass without recognizing Rose Van Luchene for furnishing the beautiful ceramic ashtrays which she custom made for this convention. Each person attending the banquet was given one of these ashtrays as a treasured memento of the 1979 MATA convention.

The new officers were introduced and are as follows:

President — Andre Morris  
Vice President — Wayne Turner  
Secretary-Treasurer — Ted Rieke  
Director — Clyde Fredrickson  
Director — Ed Obie



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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

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AERONAUTICS DIVISION

Phone 449-2506

Box 5178

Helena, Montana 59601

Michael D. Ferguson  
Administrator

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THURBER'S  HELENA

## Administrator's Column Cont.

Director — Harold Johnstone  
 Director — Richard Van Luchene  
 Executive Secretary — Karen Lathrop

I would like to congratulate all of the new officers and in addition congratulate outgoing President Dick Van Luchene and convention Chairman Jess Apedaile for a highly successful meeting.

On Sunday morning the Billings hangar of the Montana Pilots Association sponsored a delicious pancake breakfast at Gillis Aviation prepared by Harold Price and Ray Curtis. The fact that it was snowing in Billings that morning may have been one reason for such a good MATA turnout as many were temporarily weathered in. In any case, I feel that the Billings hangar deserves a pat on the back for this well-timed gesture.

\* \* \* \* \*

Under the provision of the new airline deregulation act Frontier Airlines has filed with the Civil Aeronautics Board on April 2 to discontinue air serve to Lewistown, Havre, Glasgow, Wolf Point, Sidney, Williston, Glendive, and Miles City. This is the largest subsidy eligible route system in the nation to address the replacement air carrier issue since the enactment of this law on October 24, 1978.

The law requires a 90 day notice of exit by the existing carrier. However, if a satisfactory replacement carrier cannot be in service at the end of the 90 days the CAB will require the existing carrier to remain an additional 30 days. Additional extensions of 30 day increments may be imposed on the carrier if the CAB deems it necessary.

The above mentioned communities held an organizational meeting in Helena on March 28 and 29. Each community mayor had an appointed representative present. Governor Judge appointed these representatives to serve on the Governor's Essential Air Service Task Force committee. Appointees are as follows:

Lee Baker, Chairman — Lewistown  
 Norris Hyatt — Havre  
 Maurice Sandmeyer — Sidney  
 Lyman Clayton — Wolf Point  
 Dean Holmes — Miles City  
 Pete Pederson — Glasgow  
 Bill Stebbins — Glendive

Governor Link of North Dakota has appointed Jack Daniels of Williston and Lee Stickland of Dickinson to serve on this committee also.

These gentlemen, along with Lucy Maluski, project coordinator with the Old West Regional Commission, will be working with a consultant firm in an effort to define what they believe to be essential air service.

The deregulation law mandates that the CAB must have this definition by October 24, 1979. These communities are taking aggressive action to see that air service to their cities will be at the standards they desire, not just some determination made in Washington, D.C. Meetings will take place throughout the next few months in an attempt to coordinate efforts in determining essential air service, subsidy levels, replacement carriers, scheduling, equipment, etc.



The Glendive delegation was questioned by John Smith (second from right), Western Regional Director for the Civil Aeronautics Board at the meeting held in Sidney last month.



Frank Miller (left), watching Harold Price (center) and Ray Curtis cook breakfast. The Billings hangar MPA members hosted a fly-in breakfast Sunday morning for the MATA members.

## Calendar

**April 22-25** — National Air Transportation Association 1979 Convention and Annual meeting. St. Louis, MO. Call (202) 965-8880 for further details.

**April 28-30** — Denver AOPA Flight Instructor Refresher Course. Call toll free to register (800) 638-0853.

**May 18-20** — MPA convention and annual meeting. Outlaw Inn, Kalispell.

**May 23** — Listening session with the Aeronautics Division and FAA, Helena. Call Dave Kneedler for further information (406) 449-2506.

**June 1** — Yellowstone Airport, West Yellowstone, MT, re-opens for the season.

**June 10** — Flying Farmers Fly-In Langhus Ranch.

**June 15** — Flying Farmers Wyoming Convention, A-A Ranch, Saratoga.

**June 16** — Hughes Airwest Air Race Classic. Contact (714) 438-5179 for further information.

**July 1** — Flying Farmers Fly-In, Dave Stephens.

**August 4 & 5** — Airshow Alberta '79, Medicine Hat, Alberta. Contact Roger Holmes (403) 526-5300 for details.

**August 5-10** — International Flying Farmers Convention in Oklahoma City.

**September 25-27** — National Business Aircraft Association Annual convention, Atlanta, GA.

**September 28-30** — North Dakota Flying Farmers Convention, Holiday Inn, Fargo.

**October 5-7** — Montana Flying Farmers Convention, Wolf Point.

## Caution: Sight-Seeing Over Fires

The Departments of Agriculture and Interior contract numerous light, medium, and heavy fixed-wing and rotor wing aircraft to aid in fire suppression. During daylight hours any combination of these aircraft will be coordinated by an Air Attack Boss, not necessarily limited to large fires.

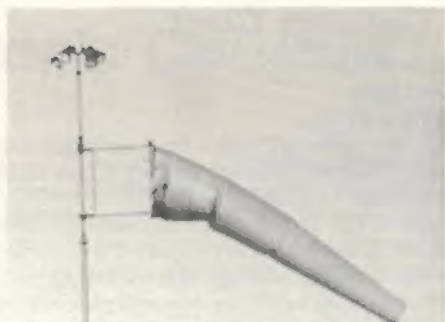
In periods of extended dry weather and high temperature, the fire spread index is high enough to warrant automatic dispatches of helicopters and fixed-wing air tankers carrying fire retardant material. These large air tankers are usually accompanied by a light twin whose mission is to lead in the heavy, less maneuverable air tankers for their dropping runs.

Pilots of both the air tanker and lead plane are concentrating heavily on the fire and communicating between themselves on a discrete frequency (AIM Part I). The lead plane will also be receiving instruction about the next drop from the Air Attack Boss who may be in the air in a helicopter, positioned for the best observation and radio communication with the Fire Boss.

Normally these large air tankers are assigned to orbit a minimum of 2,500 feet above the highest terrain. The lead plane will be in and out of various altitudes while sizing up the air and terrain obstructions before leading in another tanker drop. Some fires may offer terrain separation and air space for maneuvering. It would not be uncommon for the Air Attack Boss to assign his fixed-wing tankers and helicopters equipped with water buckets and retardant tanks to dropping missions at the same time.

Consequently, air space full of heavy smoke, turbulence, and many other aircraft on discrete frequencies is not the place for the casual onlooker. It becomes necessary for the Air Attack Boss to ask for a temporary air closure above the fire, usually 2,000 to 4,000 feet AGL and extending in a radius of sufficient miles to insure a safe air space. A Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) is authorized under FAR 91.91 and an Air Space closure is established to prevent unsafe congestion over the fire.

*Editor's Note: I appreciate the cooperation of Jim Scofield, Helicopter Operations Specialist, U.S. Forest Service, in providing this information.*



Be sure to replace that worn windsock and any burned out light bulbs.

## Spring Airport Maintenance

By: Ted Mathis

Yellowstone Airport Manager

It's spring again and soon the flying clubs, pilot and civic organizations, city and county crews will be getting together to spruce up the local airport for the summer.

Here are some maintenance items which may need attention on your airport:

1. If your airport is paved, check for and repair any pot holes that may have appeared. If you have a turf or stabilized runway, now is the time to blade off those big clumps of grass, re-seed and roll the runway while there is still some moisture in the ground.

2. How does that wind sock look? If it's frayed and torn, now is the time to replace it. The Aeronautics Division sells bright orange 18, 24 and 36 inch diameter nylon windsocks for \$16.00, \$22.00 and \$26.00 respectively. Please measure the diameter before ordering. Oh yes, while you're at the wind standard, don't forget to grease the bearings and give the standard and segmented circle a coat of paint. If you have a lighted wind cone be sure to replace any burned out bulbs.

3. Snow plows can raise havoc with runway and taxiway lights and tiedown ropes and chains. Be sure to repair or replace these items as needed.

4. Winter takes its toll on perimeter fences, gates and signs. Be sure to repair them.

5. How is your airport beacon working? When was the last time you changed the bulb, cleaned the lenses or oiled the motor? This is another

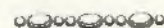
important item on your spring maintenance list.

6. A general cleanup of weeds and trash does a great deal to beautify the airport.

Your airport is the front door to your community. Why not do your part to keep it looking good and operating properly?



When was the last time your airport beacon was serviced?



North Central Airlines has purchased three Boeing 727-200 aircraft. The 164-passenger tri-jets are scheduled for delivery in March and June of 1980. The new aircraft has greater passenger and cargo capacity and a range of 2,200 miles, with over-water capabilities, and provides excellent operating performance at high-altitude airports. North Central set all-time company records by carrying 6,911,130 passengers in 1978, and passenger miles increased 38 percent. "These records can be attributed to the popularity of discounted fares, additional aircraft, a strike against another airlines, and 16 new nonstop routes," said David E. Moran, vice president of traffic and sales. North Central now serves 103 cities in 20 states and two Canadian provinces on its 23,000-mile route system.

## Airport Directory Revision

On the Dillon page of your 1979 Montana Airport Directory, under radio, the receive frequency was printed as 122.2R. Please change this to 122.1R.



Among the competitors 50 years ago when the first women's transcontinental air race took off from Santa Monica was Bobbi Trout of Carlsbad, California. She was back in Santa Monica the middle of March and is shown picking names for the order of take-off for the golden anniversary flight on June 16 — the 1979 Hughes Airwest Air Race Classic. She was assisted by Velda King Mapelli (left), president of the nationwide group that has carried on the annual race since it was discontinued as the Powder Puff Derby three years ago, and the Honorable Donna Swink, mayor of Santa Monica.

## Hughes Airwest Air Race Classic

The second annual Hughes Airwest Air Race Classic, the nation's premier aviation event for women, is revving up for another transcontinental run.

The 1979 event — making the 50th anniversary of women's air racing — will feature a theme based on nostalgia.

Laura Little of San Diego and her co-pilot, Vi Chambers of El Cajon, flying a Cherokee 140, were picked number one for takeoff.

The annual competition was carried on for 30 years as the Powder Puff Derby. When it was announced that the 1976 race was the last Powder Puff, 350 women pilots from throughout the nation organized the first Air Race Classic in 1977. It was renamed the Hughes Airwest Air Race Classic last year in recognition of the airline's sponsorship.

This year, they'll be flagged off June 16 from the Municipal Airport in Santa Monica. Flying under visual flight rules in daylight hours, the entries will have four days to cover the twisting course — Sacramento, California; Klamath Falls, Oregon; Walla Walla, Washington; Great Falls, Montana; Sheridan, Wyoming; Bismarck, North Dakota; Minneapolis, Minnesota — and reach Milwaukee, Wisconsin by the June 19 deadline.

The race is open to stock model aircraft of 145 to 570 horsepower, from the gentle Cessna Skyhawk to

the Beech Baron. Ability to apply knowledge of the plane, wind and weather will determine how trophies and more than \$20,000 in cash awards are shared.

This year, carrying forward the momentum, the race has attracted 40 first-day entries. More than twice that number are expected by the April 23 deadline for entering.

The event is open to all members of Air Race Classic, Ltd., an organization of licensed women pilots. All have an equal chance, regardless of airplane size or power. Each aircraft type is assigned a handicap speed based on its performance capabilities. Victory goes to the pilot who exceeds the handicap speed by the widest margin over the transcontinental course.

Members of the Ninety-Nines, the international organization for women in aviation, will assist along the route, timing planes between points and arranging overnight accommodations for their crews.

Entry is by invitation to all members of Air Race Classic, Ltd. Membership is open to all licensed women pilots upon payment of a \$10 initiation fee. Annual dues of \$4 will entitle a member to an entry kit for the 1979 race. Inquiries should be sent to Air Race Classic, Ltd., 2188 Palomar Airport Road, Carlsbad, California 92008 (714) 438-5179.

## May 23, 1979

By: Dave Kneedler, Chief  
Airport/Airways Bureau

May 23, 1979 — mark that date on your calendar for an important meeting in Helena. On that date (exact location as yet undetermined, but we will keep you posted) a "listening session" will be held in Helena sponsored jointly by your Aeronautics Division and the Federal Aviation Administration. The purpose of the session is two fold: (1) To inform you of our (Aeronautics and FAA) plans for next year and beyond, and (2) to discuss them with you and gain your guidance on those plans and any other issues which are of interest.

The agenda, which is tentative (we would appreciate hearing any suggestions you may have) is basically centered around status reports and current plans of each basic "section" of the Federal Aviation Administration and the Aeronautics Division. On hand for the conference will be Mr. Mervyn Martin, Regional Director of the Federal Aviation Administration, in addition to FAA region personnel in charge of; Air Traffic, Flight Standards, Airport, and Facilities. Also key personnel from your Aeronautics Division will discuss state-level programs. Topics of discussion may include recent FAA proposals to alter the positive control area, changes to FAR Part 135, renewal of the Airport Development Aid Program in 1980, the FAA's facilities and equipment schedule and the future direction of the Aeronautics Division in light of failure of our fuel tax increase effort.

We had hoped to schedule this session earlier in the winter but that proved to be a bad idea with the legislature in town resulting in a scarcity of motel rooms, etc. Although conferences of this general nature have been held in the past in Denver, this marks the first time an effort has been made to make them more convenient to the local people. We hope you will take advantage of this. It has been said that, by and large, government is as good or bad as the people allow it to be — your participation and help will go far to insure that at least the aviation end of our government is responsive and effective.



Bob Tillery (right) receiving FAA award from Bill McCart.

## Miles City FSS Awarded

For not only "providing a high level of activity under difficult conditions" but also showing an increase in activity during calendar 1978, the Miles City Flight Service Station of the Federal Aviation Administration was honored Monday by the FAA.

On hand to present station manager Bob Tillery with the award as the runner-up for the best Flight Service Station in the seven-state Rocky Mountain region was Bill McCart, operations procedure specialist in the air traffic division of the regional office in Denver.

Mr. McCart explained that Miles City's winning the award was particularly noteworthy since the local station increased its activity despite the fact that at times the normal eight-

man staff was down to four.

Mr. Tillery said keeping the station going on an around-the-clock basis when they were so short handed "was a pretty darn hard thing to do." He said the staff frequently worked six days a week instead of their normal five-day week, in order to keep going.

Despite these trying conditions, the local station increased its contacts from 100,800 during 1977 to 116,189 during calendar year 1978.

Mr. McCart said that further compounding the local station's tribulations was the fact "they not only had to train new people, but also keep up with the ongoing operations."

The local station's staff began to dwindle in September, 1977, when one of their employees transferred to Jamestown, N.D. Before he could be replaced, two more employees left to go to school in January, 1978, followed by another who went to school in June, 1978.

In the meantime, the staff had gained one trainee in March, but this was hardly enough to offset the loss of the other workers.

The busiest months of the year for the local station are May, June, July, and August, and Mr. Tillery said that he is particularly proud of the fact that the station showed its greatest increase in activity during July (38%) when the staff was still four men short.

The local FSS showed an increase of 26% in activity during May, 28½% during June, and 12% during August.

Accompanying the award presented to the FSS Monday was a letter from Larry Robison, chief of the air traffic division of the FAA in Denver, which noted the award was presented "for superior operation efficiency in the provision of flight services . . . Your ability to handle the 16% increase in activity while operating . . . below your normal staffing is especially noteworthy. During this difficult period the service provided continued to be excellent."

Winner of the award for the outstanding Flight Service Station in the Rockies was Laramie, Wyoming, with Watertown, S.D. coming in third behind Miles City. The seven states in this region are North and South Dakota, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, Idaho, and of course, Montana.

The station did not return to a full staff until October, 1978.



Miles City representatives state their case at the recent meeting held in Sidney regarding essential air service and how it will effect their community. (Note the TV cameraman to the left who filmed portions of the meeting.)



MATA members during the business meeting at their convention in Billings.

# Flying Safety Programs

By: Jack W. Van De Riet  
Accident Prevention Specialist

The March issue of "Montana And The Sky" announced the development of several new slide-tape presentations by the General Aviation Manufacturers Association. The following presentations are available at the Helena and Billings GADOs:

"General Aviation Normally Aspirated, Direct Drive Engine Operations"

"Why VSSE?"

"Don't Flirt — Skirt 'Em"

"Multi-Engine Emergency Procedures"

"Preflighting Your Avionics"

"Pilot Prerogatives"

"Stepping Up to a Complex Airplane"

"Propeller Operation and Care"

"Descent to the MDA and Beyond"

"How to Fly Your HSI"

"Facts of Twin Engine Flying"

"Maintenance Aspects of Owning Your Own Airplane"

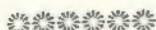
"Takeoff Performance Considerations for the Single Engine Airplane"

"Handle Like Eggs"

"Engine Operation for Pilots"

"Introduction to FAA/GAMA/Industry Slide-Tape Presentations"

"Time in Your Tanks"



Richard Coffey, Editor, Airport Services Management Magazine, was the guest speaker at the Montana Aviation Trades Association banquet.

# New Service Coming

Have you had occasion to enjoy a beautiful flight from your home airport to another and find that getting to town from that airport was more time consuming and difficult than getting there? Or have you found that local transportation was available, but you really were not ready to part with an arm and leg? For a nominal cost per use and a yearly dues fee, would you be interested in having Efficient Local Transportation (ELT)?

PILOT-CAR, Inc., can put an end to all this inconvenience and keep it so that your wallet does not get deflated. As a member of PILOT-CAR you need only ask your participating FBO for

keys to a Pilot-Car and you are on your way. It is essentially that simple.

PILOT-CAR, Inc., bills you on a monthly basis for the Pilot-Cars used. There will be a flat fee for each local use up to 24 hours, with graduated fee increases for extended use. As a member of PILOT-CAR, Inc., you will be able to reserve cars in advance just by contacting the participating FBO at your destination airport.

PILOT-CAR is negotiating with similar companies in other states so that your identification card will provide the same service in those states.

For more information fill out the form below and return it to the address noted.

**PILOT-CAR, Inc.**  
**P.O. Box 492**  
**Boulder, MT 59632**

I am interested in PILOT-CAR, Inc., and would like further information.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Pilot Rating \_\_\_\_\_

My home airport is \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to see Pilot-Cars at the following

airports \_\_\_\_\_

I would use Pilot-Cars for business ☐, pleasure ☐, other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

My automobile insurance covers me while I drive other cars.

Yes ☐ No ☐

I am willing to provide a Certificate of Insurance upon request.

Yes ☐ No ☐



Does your segmented circle need a coat of paint?

**GAMA** — For the seventh year in a row, Americans in 1978 bought more aircraft for business, commuter and personal flying than ever before, and the big business of general aviation became bigger than ever. The General Aviation Manufacturers Association said its industry delivered 17,808 airplanes, valued at \$1.78 billion, during the past year. The industry shipped 13,651 new single-engine airplanes, 2,630 multi-engine aircraft, 541 propjets, 741 agricultural planes, and 231 new jets in 1978. 514 of the nation's 1,000 largest industrial firms now operate their own aircraft, up from 502 a year ago.

#### **MEMBER**

#### **NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE AVIATION OFFICIALS**

**PURPOSE**—"To foster aviation, as an industry, as a mode of transportation for persons and property and as an arm of the national defense; to join with the Federal Government and other groups in **research, development, and advancement of aviation**; to develop uniform laws and regulations; and to otherwise encourage co-operation and mutual aid among the several states."



April, 1979

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